



Canadian Association of Chain Drug Stores  
Association canadienne des chaînes de pharmacies

## **Community pharmacy pleased Health Minister accepts BC Pharmaceutical Task Force Recommendations**

*Looks forward to ongoing discussions to enhance PharmaCare for British Columbians*

TORONTO, May 21, 2008 -- The Canadian Association of Chain Drug Stores (CACDS) credits BC Health Minister George Abbott for accepting the recommendations contained in the B.C. Pharmaceutical Task Force report released today.

According to the association, which represents 70 per cent of the community pharmacies in the province, the Task Force report reflects a well-researched and thoughtful analysis of the challenges facing BC's pharmaceutical care program and offers a number of tangible, practicable recommendations.

"By accepting the recommendations the Minister has listened to the feedback from many stakeholders," notes Nadine Saby, CACDS president and chief executive officer. "One of the important conclusions is that the key factors that must be considered in decisions about an effective PharmaCare program include choice, availability, reliability of supply and patient outcomes – not just cost of pharmaceuticals."

CACDS also praised the Task Force for recognizing that community pharmacy is widely viewed as one of the most accessible parts of the healthcare system and for recommending pharmacists be better utilized and appropriately compensated in the BC health care environment. The report concludes that government funding for pharmacy has to be addressed, and that possible cost-cutting initiatives must take into account the implications for community pharmacy or the results will be chaotic for many pharmacies and the patients they serve.

"We are encouraged by the Minister's intention to begin working with stakeholders on some recommendations immediately and we look forward to further discussions with the Ministry on these issues," says Ms. Saby.

CACDS is the national association that represents and advocates on behalf of chain community pharmacy in Canada. CACDS members represent traditional chain and banner drug stores, as well as grocery chains and mass merchandisers with pharmacies. They operate more than 5,600 pharmacies across the country, including about 700 (74 per cent) of those in British Columbia. Our members' pharmacies are the base from which approximately 15,000 pharmacists practice, many of whom have ownership stakes in their operations as franchisees, or are independent owners operating under common banner names.

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